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MUR 51100

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Tuesday, September 26, 2000

Office of General Counsel, FEC
999 E. Street NW
Washington, DC 20463

Today I watched a program purporting to be a news broadcast on KBHK Channel 45 from 10 to 11 am PDT. In fact the program was a paid political advertisement under the aegis of something called CBN, the Christian Broadcasting Network.

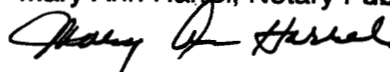
Though I am someone most would consider a sophisticated viewer, I did not become aware of the advertising nature of the broadcast for twenty minutes. Till then, I watched with dismay as the show "reported" mistruths and shenanigans by presidential candidate Al Gore, news I presumed I was hearing reported by an independent broadcaster according to generally accepted standards of objective journalism. I did not become suspicious until a "member" of an august sounding "research institute", being interviewed by a "reporter", stated that Gore's proposed budget would increase federal subsidies for unemployed single mothers and thus contribute to the deterioration of American family life.

All members of the American voting public have a right to know when we are being pitched to instead of informed. Rather than adhering to journalistic standards, this ad did the exact opposite: it was designed to look in every way as if it adhered to those standards, in order to thoroughly prepare the viewer for its deceptive message (right down to it's phony logo, which evokes CNN). I ask that this advertiser be required to constantly identify itself as advertisement, in the manner of newspaper ads that simulate news reportage, and that they be punished for their deception so far, either by fine or by being forced to advertise their previous deception at other times of the broadcast day on the stations from which they purchased time.



State of California
County of Alameda
Subscribed and Sworn to or
Affirmed Before Me
on 9-28-00
by DAVID A. BLAKE
Mary Ann Harrel, Notary Public

David A. Blake



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